

18. THE GIANT LAND SNAIL, *ACHATINA FULICA*
FÉRUSSAC, IN INDIA

The giant land snail, *Achatina fulica* Férussac, is a native of Africa. Today it is as common in some parts of India and the Indo-Pacific islands as in Africa, spreading as far west as the Hawaiian Islands.

In general shape and colour the Indian specimens appear more like those from the East African populations than those of Indonesian and Pacific populations (personal communication—Prof. A. R. Mead, 1959). In the following respects the Indian specimens differ from the nominate insular race in other countries.

The nepionic shell is of a very light horny colour. The streaks in some of the early post-nepionic whorls are brown and do not easily fade out. The 'criss-cross' texture in the early post-nepionic whorls is prominent. The columella is white with a bluish tinge towards the base, but the rest of it in the adult shell or the whole of it in the young shell is always pure white, without any trace of bluish tint.

The snail has a very limited range of distribution in India. It is found in considerable numbers in some districts of East Pakistan, in the northern and eastern parts of the State of West Bengal, and in Balasore District of Orissa. The species is rare in the western districts of West Bengal, and some parts of Bihar (Santhal Parganas) and Orissa (Cuttack). The distribution of this snail is totally unknown in other states of India and Pakistan. As far as my information goes, these snails are not found in the vicinity of Allahabad and Hyderabad and the Zoological laboratories of these areas obtain their snail supplies from Calcutta. A shell obtained from Nagpur is in the collections of the Zoological Survey of India, Calcutta; but this does not prove its distribution and presence there.

ZOOLOGICAL LABORATORIES,
CITY COLLEGE,
CALCUTTA,

K. C. GHOSE

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